

Remarks/Arguments

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, Claims 1 to 10, 17 and 20 will be pending in the present patent application. Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of Claim 13, which has been indicated as allowable by the Action. Claims 11, 13, 18, and 19 have been canceled, without prejudice.

Discussion of the Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 17, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Japanese patent application Publication No. JP 2000-038581 ("the JP 581 reference"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that the claims are unpatentable over the JP 581 reference, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claim 19 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the JP 581 reference. Although Applicants respectfully disagree that Claim 19 is unpatentable over the JP 581 reference, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the JP 581 reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,176,790 to Arleo et al. ("the 790 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that Claim 4 is unpatentable over the JP 581 reference in combination with the 790 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the JP 581 reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,403,491 to Liu et al. ("the 491 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that Claim 7 is unpatentable over the JP

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581 reference in combination with the 491 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the JP 581 reference in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,242,359 to Mlsra et al. ("the 359 patent"). Although Applicants respectfully disagree that Claims 9 and 10 are unpatentable over the JP 581 reference in combination with the 359 patent, Applicants submit that the rejection is moot in view of the foregoing amendments.

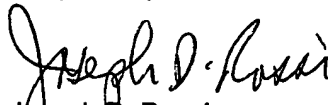
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Conclusion

Applicants believe that the foregoing constitutes a complete and full response to the Action of record. Applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an indication of allowability and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee required and any additional fees that may be needed to Deposit Account No. 01-0493 in the name of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,



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